

CLAIMS

1. A system for providing printed information to a user, the system including:
a user printer module for interfacing the user with a first database containing
5 first information, the module being responsive to the user requesting the first information
from the first database for obtaining the first information and generating a first printed
media that displays to the user the first information;
identifier means for applying an identifier to the first printed media such that
designation of the identifier by the user results in the module generating a second printed
10 media that displays to the user second information obtained from a second database; and
memory means for storing account data indicative of either or both of: the
number of times the first information is obtained from the first database; or the number
of times the second information is obtained from the second database.
- 15 2. A system according to claim 1 including:
a first server means of a first party for containing the first database, the first
server means being accessed selectively by the module for obtaining the first
information;
a second server means of a second party for containing the second database, the
20 second server means being accessed selectively by the module for obtaining the second
information; and
calculation means being responsive to the account data for determining the
quantum of a payment that is made by the user to one or both of the parties.
- 25 3. A system according to claim 2 wherein the first and the second server means are
constituted by respective hardware and software.
4. A system according to claim 2 wherein the first and second server means

include common hardware and/or software.

5. A system according to claim 2 wherein the first and second databases are separate.

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6. A system according to claim 5 wherein the first and second parties are separate legal entities.

10 7. A system according to claim 2 wherein the databases are comprised of different portions of a single database.

8. A system according to claim 7 wherein the first and second parties are the same legal entity.

15 9. A system according to claim 8 wherein the second information is derived from a fourth party and the calculation means is responsive to the account data for determining a financial debit that is applied by the first party and/or the second party against the fourth party.

20 10. A system according to claim 2 wherein the first party and the second party are separate legal entities and the account data is indicative of both the number of times first information is obtained from the first database and the number of times second information is obtained from the second database, wherein the calculation means is responsive to the account data for determining a financial debit to be applied by the first
25 party against the second party.

11. A system according to claim 10 wherein the account data is a number and the debit is proportional to that number.

12. A system according to claim 2 wherein the module is provided to the user by a third party and the calculation means is responsive to the account data for determining a financial debit to be applied by the third party against the first party or by the third party
5 against the second party.

13. A system according to claim 12 wherein the calculation means determines:
a financial debit to be applied by the third party against the first party in proportion to the number of times first information was obtained by the module from the
10 first database; and

a financial debit to be applied by the third party against the second party in proportion to the number of times second information was obtained by the module from the second database.

14. A system according to claim 2 including a plurality of modules and a corresponding plurality of users and the calculation means is responsive to the separate memory means for determining the number of times in total that the first and the second databases are accessed by the modules.

15. A system according to claim 14 wherein the memory means are collectively comprised of a central memory.

16. A system according to claim 2 wherein the account means maintains an account balance for the module.

17. A system according to claim 16 wherein the account balance is credited as a function of the number of times the first and/or second information is accessed.

18. A system according to claim 16 wherein the account balance is debited at predetermined intervals and credited as a function of the number of times the first and/or second information is accessed in the preceding interval.

19. A system according to claim 18 wherein, if the credit balance exceeds a
5 predetermined threshold, the user is eligible to claim one or more benefits.

20. A system according to claim 19 wherein a plurality of thresholds are defined and a corresponding plurality of benefit types are available for a user to claim once a respective threshold has been reached.

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21. A system according to claim 20 wherein one or more of the first second or third parties are providers of goods and/or services and the benefits obtainable by the user include those goods and/or services.

15 22. A system according to claim 20 wherein the products and/or services are provided by a party other than the first party and/or the second party.

20 23. A system according to claim 1 including calculation means responsive to the account data for determining the quantum of a payment to be made by the user to the first party.

24. A system according to claim 1 including calculation means responsive to the account data for determining the quantum of a payment to be made by the user to the second party.

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25. A system according to claim 1 including calculation means responsive to the account data for determining the quantum of a payment to be made by the second party to the first party.

26. A system for providing printed information to a user, the system including:

a user printer module for interfacing the user with a first database containing first information, the module being responsive to the user requesting the first information
5 from the first database for obtaining the first information and generating a first printed media that displays to the user the first information;

identifier means for applying an identifier to the first printed media such that designation of the identifier by the user results in the module generating a second printed media that displays to the user second information obtained from a second database;

10 memory means for storing account data indicative of either or both of: the number of times the first information is obtained from the first database; or the number of times the second information is obtained from the second database; and

payment determination means being responsive to the account data for calculating an access fee to be levied against the user for the use of the module.

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27. A system according to claim 26 wherein the payment determination means calculates the access fee as the balance of:

a predetermined periodic fee; and

a variable credit that is derived from the account data.

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28. A system according to claim 27 wherein the account data is a number and the variable credit is derived from a multiple of that number.

29. A system according to claim 27 including account means for receiving a
25 payment from the user when the payment determination means calculates a positive value for the access fee.

30. A system according to claim 27 wherein the payment determination means

calculates the access fee periodically.

31. A system according to claim 30 wherein the module is disabled if the access fee is not paid by the user within a predetermined period from the calculation of the fee.

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32. A system for providing printed information to a user, the system including:

a user printer module for interfacing the user with a first database containing first information, the module being responsive to the user requesting the first information from the first database for obtaining the first information and generating a first printed

10 media that displays to the user the first information;

an identifier database for supplying an identifier to the first printed media such that designation of the identifier by the user results in the module generating a second printed media that displays to the user second information obtained from a second database; and

15 an account database for storing account data indicative of either or both of: the number of times the first information is obtained from the first database; or the number of times the second information is obtained from the second database.

33. A system according to claim 32 including:

20 a first server of a first party for containing the first database, the first server being accessed selectively by the module for obtaining the first information; and

a second server of a second party for containing the second database, the second server being accessed selectively by the module for obtaining the second information, wherein the account server is responsive to the account data for determining a financial
25 debit that is applied by one or both of the parties against the user.

34. A system for providing printed information to a user, the system including:

a user printer module for interfacing the user with a first database containing

first information, the module being responsive to the user requesting the first information from the first database for obtaining the first information and generating a first printed media that displays to the user the first information;

- 5 an identifier database for supplying an identifier to the first printed media such that designation of the identifier by the user results in the module generating a second printed media that displays to the user second information obtained from a second database;

- 10 an account database for storing account data indicative of either or both of: the number of times the first information is obtained from the first database; or the number of times the second information is obtained from the second database; and

 an account server for accessing the account database and being responsive to the account data for calculating an access fee to be levied against the user for the use of the module.

- 15 35. A system according to claim 34 wherein the account server calculates the access fee as the balance of:

 a predetermined periodic fee; and

 a variable credit that is derived from the account data.